

**BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
11/29/21**

A Special Meeting of Council was held on **Monday, November 29, 2021**, at 6:30 PM, at the Council Room, 125 So. Walnut Street, First Floor, Slatington, PA 18080.

Presiding: Bryon Reed: President of Council

Recording Secretary: Daniel Stevens, Borough Manager/Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Reed at 6:30 PM with the following in attendance:

**ROLL CALL:**

<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>OTHERS PRESENT</u>	<u>VISITORS</u>
Bryon Reed	Jason Ruff	Chief Rachman	Jeffrey Hausman
Kevin Steckel	Mayor Niedermeyer	Daniel Stevens	Jeralyn Schoch
Joseph Wechsler (via phone)			Austin Berger
David Schnaars			Kris Porter (Times News)
Thomas Bartholomew			
Ronald Kratz			

**NOTIFICATION:**

President Reed announced that all public sessions of Borough Council are electronically recorded and such recordings are maintained as part of the meeting record until the minutes are transcribed and approved by the Board, at which time the recordings shall be erased.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – None**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (Agenda and Non-Agenda items) You will have three minutes to address Council from the podium. The three minutes applies to your time at the podium. If you exit the podium, you have yielded the floor, and any time you have remaining. None

7.a Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to accept bids for the 1997 GMC 3500 dump truck listed on Municibid. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

7.b Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to sell the 1997 GMC 3500 dump truck to the high bidder for the price of \$7,600.00. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed		
	Joseph Wechsler		
	David Schnaars		
	Thomas Bartholomew		
	Ronald Kratz		
	Kevin Steckel		

8. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to approve roofing work by Joel Alpha Roofing for the maintenance garage at a cost of \$1,800.00. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed		

Joseph Wechsler  
David Schnaars  
Thomas Bartholomew  
Ronald Kratz  
Kevin Steckel

9. Councilor Steckel made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to approve roofing work done by Joel Alpha Roofing for the fire company and using COVID19 LFRF for the sum of \$6,200.00. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed Joseph Wechsler David Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz Kevin Steckel		

10.a Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to accept the bids for the municipal solid waste contract – contingent upon approval from Borough Solicitor. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

10.b Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to award bid for municipal solid waste contract to County Waste of Pennsylvania, LLC for the 3-year contract at a cost of \$1,474,904.88. This is the total cost for 3-years and is for trash pick-up every week over a 3-day period and recycling pick-up every other week. This motion is contingent on approval from Borough Solicitor regarding any and all bidding requirements. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed Joseph Wechsler David Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz Kevin Steckel		

**11. Discussion of 2022 Preliminary Budget:**

General Fund

Page 6 – Expense – Police. Chief Rachman stated the police chief salary reflects 2.75 increase, which is the collective bargaining raise for 2022; full-time patrol salary reflects the addition of Officer Pforter and Sgt. Alercia’s salary, plus the 2.75 increase for full-time officers. Part-time police are lowered slightly since there are more full-time police officers. The cost of supplies is increasing, i.e., gasoline, vehicle maintenance, IT & data processing, travel expenses for training. Vehicle purchase budget is lower due to paying off the 2018 vehicle. Chief Rachman added that it would be prudent to replace unit 602 in the future. The total budget for Police for 2022 is \$953,525.00 (this was discussed first at the request of Chief Rachman)

Liquid Fuels Fund

Page 1 – Revenue & Expense. Manager Stevens stated the liquid fuels balance of \$138,000.00 reflects paying out \$60,000.00 for the traffic signal at Main and Church Sts, whether it gets billed the end of this year or beginning of next year. There was a decrease in highway aid – road maintenance & repairs. The total 2022 expenses for liquid fuels are \$111,757.00.

#### Garbage Fund

Page 1 – Revenue. Manager Stevens informed the Council that the committee had recommended raising the rate for garbage to \$80.00 per quarter from the current \$50.00 per quarter.

Page 2 – Expense. The borough will continue to conduct two electronics recycling events and split the grinding cost with Washington Township. The total 2022 expenses for the garbage are \$598,560.00. Revenues are \$530,515.00. \$68,045.00 will come out of the surplus in the garbage fund.

#### Sewer Fund

Page 1 – Revenue. Manager Stevens stated that the Walnutport Authority and Washington Township billing should be caught up by the end of this year. Manager Stevens also stated that the 2021 PA Small Water/Sewer Grant for the digester lid removal project is still reflected due to the fact that it has not gone out to bid.

Page 2 – Expense. Manager Stevens pointed out to the Council that the Contracted Services will be going up in 2022 for LCA televising and calculated the cost with Kenny Fulford for a total of \$40,000.00.

Pages 3 & 4 – Expense. Manager Stevens pointed out that the price of chemicals has increased and the budget amount has doubled. The 2021 Laboratory Reports cost was low, but DEP will be requiring more testing for 2022. Maintenance cost for the building dropped since we put the new roof on last year. There is an increase of \$8,800.00 to work on the reed beds. Contracted Services increased due to the amount of pumping that is done. Manager Stevens informed the Council that the total health care costs for this year is \$326,845.00 for the entire budget, an increase of \$42,849.00. Most of the increase incurred due to adding a police officer and another switching to a family plan. Manager Stevens stated the sewer fund has \$151,295.00 surplus.

#### Water Fund

Page 1 – Revenue. No issues. Revenue has increased slightly.

Page 2 – Expense. There is an increase in Insurance for the Water Department to \$9,500.00.

Page 3 – Expense. There is an increase for chemical cost increased from \$27,000.00 to \$50,000.00, and heating oil costs have been increased by 50%.

Page 4 – Expense. The maintenance for the fire hydrants increased from \$900.00 to \$5,000.00 due the cost of replacing a damaged hydrant. Health insurance has increased significantly. Surplus on water is \$175,150.00.

President Reed added that there are a lot of water lines that must be replaced in the future, and that eats up money rapidly.

#### Fire Fund

Page 1 – Revenue. No change.

Page 2 – Expense. Manager Stevens pointed out the It & Data Processing was added for \$2,700.00. Austin Berger informed the Council this is to accommodate a new county system to allow tablets in all the apparatus and allow them to get live updates. Justin stated they have received \$500.00 from a grant, which brings the total up to \$2,000.00 for the tablets. The \$2,700.00 is for a monthly expense of \$225.00 per month for a data plan. Building maintenance has been reduced and nothing is budgeted for gasoline or diesel. Manager Stevens stated that in order to help with the fire department in maintenance that possibly COVID LFRF could be used.

President Reed inquired if the fire trucks have the capability to control the traffic lights. Justin said purchasing the equipment would be \$12,000.00 to \$15,000.00 per truck. Councilor Schnaars suggested paying for the fire departments gas/diesel from the general account. Council agreed to remove the fuel cost from the fire department budget.

### General Fund

Page 1 – Revenue. No issues

Page 2 – Revenue. Manager Stevens pointed out the PA Dept. Conservation & National Resources Grant – this is the GTRP grant that the borough just received for the trail. On the revenue side it is \$105,489.00. On the expense side the borough's match is 15% (\$18,616.00) match. The total project cost is \$124,105.00 The \$95,069.00 is the CDBG money for Lehigh County next year for E. Franklin Street. The borough's refund of health insurance for 2021 was \$54,253.00, but we will not receive any refund in 2022.

Page 3 – Revenue. No issues

Page 4 – Expense. For civil & military celebrations flags will be ordered again next year. Line Item 401.310 - Prof. Services – Codification line has been added for \$10,000.00.

Page 5 – Expense. The Council discussed advertising for the tax collector position. Manager Stevens stated that he had to up the costs for building maintenance based on fuel costs. The Council agreed that the roof must be done on the municipal building.

Page 6 – Expense – Police. Discussed prior.

Page 7 – Expense – Line Item 414.134 - Planning & Zoning includes a possible new part-time employee.

Page 8 – Expense – Line Item 430.146 is also figured in the Public Works/Hwy Dept – Storm Sewers & Drains Line Item 436.112. There is an increase in gasoline and diesel. Manager Stevens stated they are still in negotiations for the non-uniform contract.

Page 9 – Expense. No issues

Page 10 – Expense. Councilor Schnaars questioned the increase for Line Item 487.197 Non-Unif Pension – Plan Fees. Manager Stevens informed him that they were years behind in doing this paperwork for us. Now the reports have to be done for 2015, 2016, 2017. Years 2018, 2019, 2020, will be done next year.

The General Revenue is \$2,041,177.00, Expenses - \$2,173,760.00, Deficit - \$132,583.00.

The Council discussed general items in the budget.

President Reed called for a recess at 8:58 PM. President Reed reconvened the meeting at 9:07 PM.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** President recessed to executive session at 9:08 PM. At 9:33 PM President Reed reconvened the meeting. Matters of personnel were discussed in executive session.

Discussion continued on the budget. Manager Stevens brought up more ideas for the COVID LFRF remaining monies. Suggestions were the, NLRA, infrastructure, and storm sewer. Council agreed to the following general fund modifications: 1) remove the \$20,000.00 match for the Victory Park bathrooms and pay for it with COVID19 LFRF, 2) increase the NLRA funding from \$6.00 to \$7.00 per capita. A \$4,232.00 increase, 3) remove \$15,000.000 for Borough Hall roof and pay for it with COVID19 LFRF; 4) reduce the codification to \$5,000.00 and pay for it over a 2-year period.

12. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Steckel, to advertise the preliminary budget as the Council modified it for 2022. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed Kevin Steckel Joseph Wechsler Dave Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz		

13. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to authorize the Borough Manager to advertise Ordinance 708, *Ordinance fixing the tax rate for Real Estate Tax for the fiscal year 2022, fixing the per capita tax at \$5.00 and reenacting the 1% wage tax, the Borough of Slatington local service tax of \$52.00, 1% realty transfer tax under the local enabling act, and setting the fire fund tax rate*, with the following modifications: add .55 mills to general fund (\$95,700.00), this would be a 10.73% tax increase to the current millage rate and keeping everything else the same and adding .55 mills to the existing ordinance. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed Kevin Steckel Joseph Wechsler Dave Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz		

14. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Steckel, to discuss an advertisement for the upcoming vacancy in tax collector position. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

Manager Stevens stated the position must be a Slatington resident. Resumes should be in by December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to authorize Manager Stevens to advertise for the tax collector position with resumes due in the Borough office by December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

**15.** Councilor Bartholomew made a motion to discuss advertising for a part-time assistant code officer position the first of the year at the rate of \$15.00 per hour, 19 hours a week. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to authorize Manager Stevens to advertise for a part-time assistant code officer position at the rate of \$15.00 per hour, 19 hours a week beginning in 2022. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

**16. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR** – (Agenda Items Only – You will have two (2) minutes to address Council from the podium on Agenda Items Only.) **None**

**17. EXECUTIVE SESSION: None**

**18.. OTHER BUSINESS: None**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, Councilor Schnaars made the motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to adjourn the meeting. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

President Reed declared the meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Daniel L. Stevens  
Borough Secretary